

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 1987

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RAHALL SAYS HOUSE/SENATE CONFERENCE NEAR AGREEMENT ON NEW RIVER PARKWAY FUNDING

Washington, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) says that House/Senate conferees on a highway funding bill have reached a tentative agreement on a funding formula which will, in effect, provide for 80% federal funding for the proposed New River Parkway.

The panel is nearing a final agreement on a highway bill which will authorize \$94.5 million for West Virginia's road construction and maintenance program, as passed originally by the House in January. Included is \$9.7 million in Interstate construction funding and \$16.8 million for Interstate maintenance work, as well as \$62 million for work on rural roads and bridges. In addition, the bill authorizes funds for the discretionary bridge program from which money will be expended to replace the Sixth Street Bridge in Huntington.

"I am pleased to note that the bill also authorizes funding for the New River Parkway Authority in southern West Virginia," Rahall said. "The agreement, if finalized, will provide an 80% federal share in funding for these projects with a 20% matching share by the state. While the House passed version provided for 100% federal funding, the Senate's version instituted cost-sharing requirements. Through these negotiations, we were able to keep the state's obligation to a minimum."

Rahall says completion of the highway conference is at hand. "I expect the conferees to iron out any remaining differences soon. The conference agreement should be before both the House and Senate next week for final passage. It is imperative that both the Congress and the President act quickly on the bill so as to release funding in time for this year's construction season."

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